

Protecting the Public and Preventing Slips & Falls

Whether you contract snow removal or perform it with in-house personnel, maintain a hard copy log of all activities, documenting the start of removal or salting, completion time, inspection for refreeze and reapplication of de-icer. Take time-stamped pictures of your efforts when completed.

If you contract snow removal, make sure contracts are in place with your vendors. Make sure you have up-to-date certificates of insurance from them. Consider having a pre-season meeting to go over notification and communication processes, problem areas on the property and general expectations for response (e.g., more than one inch of snow accumulation and/or sleet and iced over conditions). Establish priorities such as the following for removal:

- Fire lanes must be open for emergency equipment. Fire hydrants must be free of snow and accessible at all times.
- Main entrances, ADA ramps and curb cuts, weather-exposed stairs, primary sidewalks and parking lots should be cleaned before the building opens.

- Parking lots, secondary entrances and other low-usage areas should be cleaned by noon (or “x” hours after snowfall ends).

Snow piles should be located near (but not obstruct) available drainage facilities. Where feasible, snow piles should not be placed uphill of where melting snow may cause a walking surface to become wet and then more hazardous when refrozen.

Consider acquiring a subscription to a weather service with credentialed meteorologists. While it may appear that the forecast information is not markedly different from free media forecasts, reliance on local media outlets does not provide documentation of forecaster credentials, and likely does not provide the kind of ongoing documentation of conditions that may be required in defense of a slip/fall claim several years later.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact your local PMA Risk Control Consultant or reach out to us at heretohelp@pmagroup.com.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

The information and suggestions presented by PMA Companies in this risk control technical bulletin are for your consideration in your loss prevention efforts. They are not intended to be complete or definitive in identifying all hazards associated with your business, preventing workplace accidents, or complying with any safety related or other laws or regulations. PMA Companies does not provide legal advice and the information and suggestions in this bulletin should not be construed as such. You are encouraged to alter the information and suggestions to fit the specific hazards of your business and to have your legal counsel review all of your plans and company policies.

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